

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide our clients with information about the laboratory services available and to provide a guide for collecting and submitting specimens for analysis.

This ninth edition can also be accessed on the DHEC Internet web site.

It is also available in unbound hard copy upon request. Notify the laboratory at 803-896-0941.

Note to DHEC county staff:

This edition replaces those portions of the nurses' laboratory manual which pertain to the services of the Bureau of Laboratories. It does not contain the sections on tests and procedures performed at the local health departments. Therefore, the nurses' manual should be retained for this information.

History

The Bureau of Laboratories, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, formerly named the State Public Health Laboratory, is a multi-disciplinary, integrated source of diagnostic services including analytical support and consultation for physicians, private laboratories and county health departments. The Bureau of Laboratories is prepared to assist in any national public health emergency.

The State Public Health Laboratory opened its doors on July 1, 1908 on the University of South Carolina campus with a staff of one. During the first year, specimens were examined for typhoid, tuberculosis, diphtheria, intestinal parasites, water pollution and rabies. Today the Bureau of Laboratories has a staff of 100 and is housed in a separate laboratory building with a specialized air handling system designed for processing any infectious, toxic, or carcinogenic material except the most highly infectious organisms such as Marburg, Lassa and Ebola viruses.

The mission of the Bureau of Laboratories is to provide laboratory-based health and environmental assessments for accurate diagnosis, prevention and surveillance of infectious and chronic diseases, congenital disorders and environmental hazards to reduce the incidence of illness and death and to improve the quality of life among the people of the state.